

Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA)
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

Office: Alaska State Office

Tracking Number: DOI-BLM-AK-0000-2017-0004-DNA

Casefile/Project Number: AA094524

Proposed Action Title/Type: Oil and Gas Lease Sale in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska

Location/Legal Description: National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska on Alaska's North Slope

A. Description of the Proposed Action and any applicable mitigation measures

Since 2011, BLM Alaska has held annual NPR-A oil and gas lease sales in concert with the State of Alaska's annual oil and gas lease sale on adjoining state lands. The National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) Integrated Activity Plan (IAP/EIS) Record of Decision (ROD) signed February 21, 2013 allows for multiple oil and gas lease sales. The next sale is December 6, 2017 (see map attached).

A total of 900 tracts encompassing approximately 10.3 million acres will be offered in the 2017 NPR-A oil and gas lease sale, all located within the approximately 11.6 million acres authorized for leasing by the Secretary of the Interior in the 2013 ROD. Currently there are 189 authorized oil and gas leases totaling 1,372,688 acres in the NPR-A. Approximately 11 million acres, including approximately 3.1 million acres within the Teshekpuk Lake Special Area, are not available for oil and gas leasing under the 2013 ROD and are not being offered in this lease sale.

Best Management Practices (BMPs) and lease stipulations were adopted in the 2013 ROD to ensure that oil and gas operations are conducted in a manner that minimizes adverse impacts to the land, resources, land uses, and users. BMPs and lease stipulations (see Appendix A of the ROD) will be incorporated into the lease terms associated with the proposed action.

B. Land Use Plan (LUP) Conformance

LUP Name:

- National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (2012) and Record of Decision (2013)
- Colville River Special Area Management Plan and associated Environmental Assessment, and Decision Record (July 2008) and the September 2013 update.

Date Approved:

- December 19, 2012 (NPR-A IAP) and February 21, 2013 (ROD)
- July 2008 (Colville River Special Area Management Plan); September 27, 2013 (Colville River Special Area Management Plan update)

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUP and ROD, which provides the basis for current management of the NPR-A planning area.

C. Identify applicable National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents and other related documents that cover the proposed action.

- NPR-A IAP/EIS (December 2012) and ROD (February 2013)
- Colville River Special Area Management Plan and associated Environmental Assessment, and Decision Record (July 2008) September 27, 2013 (Colville River Special Area Management Plan update)

D. NEPA Adequacy Criteria

1. a. Is the new proposed action a feature of, or essentially similar to, an alternative analyzed in the existing NEPA document?

Yes. The current proposal is part of the preferred alternative previously analyzed in the IAP/EIS. The ROD authorized multiple oil and gas lease sales for the land BLM is offering in the 2017 lease sale. This proposed lease sale will be the fifth within NPR-A under the 2013 ROD.

1. b. Is the project within the same analysis area, or if the project location is different, are the geographic and resource conditions sufficiently similar to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document? If there are any differences, can you explain why they are not substantial?

Yes. The proposed lease sale is within the area analyzed in the NPR-A IAP/EIS.

2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s) appropriate with respect to the current proposed action, given current environmental concerns, interests, and resource values?

Yes. The NPR-A IAP/EIS analyzed a broad range of alternatives for the entire NPR-A planning area, including alternatives that closed various areas to leasing. Each alternative included a wide range of stipulations and BMPs to protect surface resources and address a wide variety of environmental concerns, interests, and resource values.

3. Is the existing analysis valid in light of any new information or circumstances (such as, rangeland health standard assessment, recent endangered species listings, updated lists of BLM-Sensitive species)? Can you reasonably conclude that new information and new circumstances would not substantially change the analysis of the new proposed action?

Yes. The existing analysis and conclusions are adequate as provided for within the 2012 NPR-A IAP/EIS and the 2013 ROD. There is no new information or circumstances that would substantially change the analysis for the proposed lease sale.

4. Are the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects that would result from implementation of the new proposed action similar (both quantitatively and qualitatively) to those analyzed in existing NEPA documents?

Yes. The direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of this proposed action are similar and essentially unchanged from those identified in the multiple sale analysis in the NPR-A IAP/EIS. BLM's monitoring of activities in the NPR-A since the completion of the IAP/EIS indicate that impacts are consistent with those that were anticipated and analyzed.

This is an exploratory lease area and therefore there is no current production or wells capable of production in the proposed offered tracts. Oil production probability for the northeast of the NPR-A is projected to be greater than the remainder of the NPR-A. Areas to the south and west are prone to natural gas production that is largely known and not economically viable at this time.

Air pollutant emission impacts and greenhouse gas impacts are similar and unchanged from the discussion and analysis found in the NPR-A IAP/EIS. Any related direct and indirect air pollutant impacts and greenhouse gas emissions related to exploratory wells and potential development on any parcels offered in this sale has been discussed and analyzed in the document.

The BLM has carefully reviewed the IAP/EIS in preparation of this sale and determined that its analysis of potential impacts still reflects the best available information. With respect to climate change, the IAP contains a robust qualitative discussion of potential impacts. The BLM has reviewed that analysis and determined it remains relevant to the lease sale being proposed.

In the future, after additional exploration, delineation, & production of resources, BLM will have the data to conduct a more rigorous quantitative analysis of future production when there is sufficient data to accurately estimate potential production from wells on tracts being offered for this sale.

5. Are the public involvement and interagency review associated with existing NEPA document(s) adequate for the current proposed action?

Yes. The NPR-A IAP/EIS involved extensive public participation and specifically addressed multiple oil and gas lease sales, including the area proposed to be made available for leasing in the 2017 lease sale and areas not available. BLM also issued a Federal Register notice pertaining to the proposed lease sale on August 7, 2017 and the NPR-A Notice of Sale published in the Federal Register in the fall of 2017.

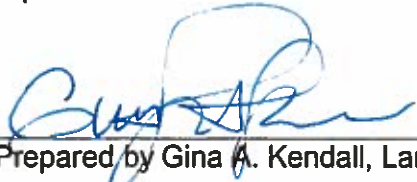
E. Persons/Agencies/BLM Staff Consulted

Name	Title	Resource Represented
Carol Taylor	Chief, Mineral Law	Oil and Gas
Rob Brumbaugh	Chief, Energy Section	Oil and Gas
Serena Sweet	Chief, Planning	Planning

Note: Refer to the NPR-A IAP/EIS for a complete list of the team members participating in the preparation of the original planning documents.

Conclusion

Based on the review documented above, I conclude that this proposal conforms to the applicable land use plans and that the existing NEPA documentation fully covers the proposed action and constitutes BLM's compliance with the requirements of NEPA.


Prepared by Gina A. Kendall, Land Law Examiner Date 9/26/17


Approved by Karen E. Mouritsen, Acting Alaska State Director Date 9-26-17

Note: The signed Conclusion on this Worksheet is part of an interim step in the BLM's internal decision process and does not constitute an appealable decision.

Map 1: NPR-A Proposed Sale Lease Tracts